

## Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

EA-07 ACDA-07 /086 W

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R 301518Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WQSHDC 2380

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 3032

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 4222

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, US, NO

SUBJ: NORWEGIAN REACTION TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT

REF:: (A) STATE 211862, (B)OSLO4123

SUMMARY : NORWEGIAN REACTION TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT HAS BEEN LOW KEY BUT HAS REFLECTED THE CONCERN FOR POTENTIALLY EXPLOSIVE THREAT KOREAN SITUATION PRESENTS FOR WORLD PEACE. GOVERNMENT SOUGHT TO EVALUATE INCIDENT AND ITS POTENTIAL THREAT, BUT GAVE NO PUBLIC STATEMENT ON IT. MEDIA PROVIDED GENERALLY FACTUAL COVERAGE WITH LIMITED COMMENTARY, POINTING UP DANGER TO WORLD PEACE. NO ONE HAS CRITICIZED US FOR ITS REACTION OR HANDLING OF INCIDENT. INCIDENT NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE NORWEGIAN APPROACH TO KOREA IN UNGA BUT WILL MAKE THEM MORE AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF ACHIEVING COMPROMISE THERE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRINCIPAL NORWEGIAN RESPONSE TO PANMUMJOM INCIDENT HAS BEEN EXPRESSION OF CONCERN FOR THE DANGER TO WORLD PEACE. GOVERNMENT MADE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON INCIDENT. WE WERE INFORMED THAT DEFENSE MINISTRY ACTED RAPIDLY TO OBTAIN FACTS  
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AND PREPARE EVALUATION OF INCIDENT. MINISTRY OFFICIALS WERE

APPRECIATIVE OF ADVICE US PROVIDED ON ITS RESPONSE TO INCIDENT. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS, MATTER CAME UP ONLY IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION OF UN KOREAN RESOLUTION WHERE NORWEGIAN OFFICER AGREED THAT INCIDENT WAS SUGGESTIVE OF CONTINUING NORTH KOREAN INTRANSIGENCE WHICH WOULD MAKE DIFFICULT SETTLEMENT OF KOREAN ISSUES AT UNGA.

2. COVERAGE IN PRESS, RADIO AND TV HAS BEEN MODERATE AND LARGELY FACTUAL. MEDIA HAS EMPHASIZED THE DETERMINED AND DEFENSIVE NATURE OF US ACTIONS AND LATER GAVE PLAY TO KIM IL SUNG'S EXPRESSION OF REGRET. THE LIBERAL OSLO DAILY "DAGBLADET" COMMENTED THAT NORTH KOREA USED INCIDENT TO ATTEMPT MUSTER SUPPORT FOR SRI LANKA NON-ALIGNED MEETING, HAS BECOME VICTIM OF HIS OWN PROPAGANDA AND AFTER DEMONSTRATING HIS AGGRESSIVE DESIGNS HAD TO BACK DOWN. THE SAME NEWSPAPER ALONG WITH THE NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT OF CONSERVATIVE OSLO DAILY "AFTENPOSTEN" SUGGESTED THAT FOLLOWING THE INCIDENT PRESIDENT FORD COULD BE EXPECTED TO TAKE A HARD LINE BECAUSE IT WAS AN ELECTION YEAR AND BECAUSE HE NEEDED TO UNITE HIS PARTY.

3. DURING PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY OFFICIAL TWO PROMINENT LOCAL MEDIA CORRESPONDENTS SAID THE INCIDENT DEMONSTRATED THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE NORTH KOREANS: THEY INDICATED THEY FELT THE US HAD HANDLED THE SITUATION PROPERLY.

4. COMMENT: OVERALL WE BELIEVE THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT SERVED TO REMIND NORWEGIANS OF THE DANGERS OF THE KOREAN SITUATION AND THE UNCERTAIN BEHAVIOR OF THE NORTH KOREANS. THE FIRM AND RAPID US REACTION, WHILE COMMENTED UPON, MOST LIKELY WILL BE VIEWED AS A REASSURANCE TO NORWEGIANS THAT US MEANS TO LIVE UP TO ITS COMMITMENTS. WE DO NOT EXPECT INCIDENT WILL ALTER NORWEGIAN APPROACH TO KOREAN ISSUE IN UNGA, EXCEPT TO MAKE THEM MORE AWARE OF THE HARD LINE TAKEN BY NORTH KOREA AND DIFFICULTY OF GETTING NORTH KOREANS TO BE WILLING TO COMPROMISE ON THE ISSUE (OSLO 4123).  
ANDERS

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